

County Planning Sets

Dates

11 Apr 1985

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There were no stipulations needed in the A-1 to RA-3 change. A public hearing has been set for May 15, and the Wasatch County Commission has to approve the changes also, after the hearing for them to be effective.

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Seminars will educate Davis planners on their duties

30 Oct 1986

FARMINGTON — A series of seminars to educate planning commission members on their duties and legal issues has been approved by the Davis County Council of Governments.

The seminars will be held twice a year, with the fall session concentrating on duties and responsibilities and the spring seminar devoted to issues of long-range planning, said Davis County planner Will Sommerkorn.

Sommerkorn estimated that more than 125 people serve on various planning commissions in the county, adding that as new members are named and older ones leave, a 25 percent annual turnover results.

Not everyone named to his city's planning commission has an exact idea of what he is supposed to do or, more importantly, what his legal responsibilities are, Sommerkorn said.

The mayors attending the COG meeting agreed, approving the proposal unanimously.

Some mayors, mostly from the county's smaller towns, indicated they have problems finding interested and

qualified people to serve on planning commissions.

One pointed out that the appeals board members could also use some training, saying almost everyone in his community who asks for a variance after being denied by the planning commission receives one.

"As turnovers occur, new planning commission members look for help in learning their responsibilities," Sommerkorn said in his recommendation. "Long-time planning commission members often could use refresher and new insights into duties and responsibilities."

Sommerkorn said volunteer speakers ranging from county planning staff members to local attorneys specializing in land use issues could be obtained for the three-hour seminars. He estimated the cost at \$5 per person attending.

"Planning commissions should be the place where a long, hard look is taken at the future of our communities. Too often, however, they are bogged down in day to day adminis-

tration of zoning and subdivision ordinances," Sommerkorn said in his recommendation.

"Some time to reflect on what we are creating and where we are heading with the things we approve might help open up some of that long range vision," he said.

The seminars, in addition to local planners and attorneys, would draw on material available from the universities in the state and source material from outside the state, Sommerkorn said.

His first seminar, proposed for Oct. 27, would include talks on zoning in general, the state enabling legislation on zoning, new state laws, and recent court decisions.

County planners should leave reviews to staff, task force says

By Roger Pusey
Deseret News business writer

9-27-89

The Salt Lake County Planning Commission should be less involved in the review of the details of the planning and development review process, leaving these activities to a qualified and adequately funded staff.

This is one of the recommendations in a report prepared by the Salt Lake Area Chamber of Commerce's Planning and Development Services Task Force that will be sent to Salt Lake County Commissioner Tom Shimizu in a few weeks, according to David W. Eckhoff, task force chairman.

The report said the planning commission should devote its time to major issues such as overall community development guidelines, undertaking and completion of rational community master plans and review and approval of zoning changes.

"The time and effort of the members of the planning commission could in this way be directed more fully to some of the more pressing problems which are facing our communities," the report said.

Eckhoff said the chamber has maintained an ongoing interest in reducing impediments to business and in promoting efficient and effective local government, but in many instances the chamber has found itself in an adversarial position on actions taken by local government, the report said.

The main goals of the task force are to examine procedural aspects of the county's planning and development services activities, review some important policy aspects of the Public Works Department as they relate to elimination of impediments to business and review the responsi-

bility, authority and performance of the various levels of county government.

The other recommendations in the report are:

- The role of community councils must be better defined to determine what forms of input appropriate in the planning and development services processes. Community council review of conditional use permit applications should be rapid, procedurally constrained and strictly advisory.

- The applicability of the permitted use should be expanded. A requirement for doing so may be the preparation of a more comprehensive set of development standards and careful preparation of such standards would facilitate rapid processing, giving the development community a better understanding of the review and approval process.

- The authority of the development services staff should be expanded.

- Development services should prepare a flow chart, which defines the requirements of the applicant and outlines the processing sequences and scheduled for the various applications received for review and approval.

- Each development services applicant should be assigned to a specific staff member who will be aware of the application's status.

- County ordinances should be changed to address several recommendations from the task force.

- County commissioners should adequately fund planning and development services divisions no improvements can be made. Adequate education and staff training should have a high priority.

Brighton Developers Present Plans To Planning Commissions

Members of the team developing Brighton's expansion into Wasatch County presented their plans and answered questions during a public meeting conducted by the Midway Planning Commission and attended by the Wasatch County Planning Commission last week.

The meeting was called at the request of Mayor Reed Bezzant when he learned the developers had requested a zoning change in order to build two ski lifts west of Midway, because of the potential effects on the city. He asked that the County planner and planning Commission keep Midway informed as Brighton's plans are developed and for the city's input to be included as the County makes decisions governing the project.

The ski resort wants to develop 600 acres in Snake Creek, primarily for expert skiing, but also with runs for intermediate skiers. The lifts can accommodate a maximum total of 900 skiers per hour, but that doesn't mean 900 individuals on the slopes at one time because one skier can make several trips per hour.

They said they expect several hundred skiers at any given time with 600 maximum, and that

parking for 150 cars would be required. Randy Doyle, Brighton manager for Boyne USA, Inc., the resort's parent company, assured that the company is in the business of developing recreation and has no intention whatever of building condominiums or hotel accommodations to support the Snake Creek ski facilities. He also doubted that anyone else would be able to because of the steep terrain and County codes.

Biat Von Allman, project director, pointed out on maps that there aren't a lot of trees on the slopes and that in many cases there are natural trails that won't require any clearing at all. In any case, he said very few changes will have to be made and the pine and aspen trees will be preserved as much as possible.

He said where bulldozers must create ski runs, the dirt will not just be pushed aside and left, but will be removed to build up other areas. Whatever areas may be damaged will be replanted with natural vegetation and there will be a lot of reclamation to restore previous damage. He also said that historically, water runoff from a ski area is cleaner after it has been used

a few years than it was before facilities were built.

He said a preliminary environmental study has been prepared and that the plan will include erosion and avalanche control. All the environmental studies that could be conducted with snow on the ground have been completed, and he said the rest of the work will be completed as soon as the snow has melted.

The plans include constructing two buildings, a restaurant in a saddle at the top, easily accessible from both sides of the mountain, and a warming cabin with a ticket office at the bottom of the new double chair lifts. The buildings were designed by a Midway architect, George Olson, who also designed the Heber Valley Information and Visitors Center, being constructed in Heber City, and other European-Alpine theme building in the County.

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Brighton...

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But Von Allman assured him that since it takes expert skiers to ski the advanced slopes, there would not be a higher rate of injuries. Doyle said Brighton provides its own medical personnel and that there are presently 16 EMTs on the staff. He said before the new facility is opened, a complete plan, covering every foreseeable emergency, including evacuation of injured skiers, would be in place.

Doyle explained the development team intended to continue their studies and to develop more detailed plans, but that they didn't want to invest any more money unless the County changes the zoning, approves what they have done so far, and reacts positively to what they propose.

Les Corbett, chairman of the Midway Planning Commission, said the Commission would discuss what they had learned and ask some technical questions at a later time.

Von Allman said skiers will be transported by bus or snow cat from parking lots to the lifts. He said the company would be responsible for graveling, improving and maintaining a road formerly used as access to a mine, if buses or vans are used, but there is no plan to oil a road. And he said if snow cats can meet the demand and snow is deep, a road won't be needed.

When asked what the project will cost the County and what the County can expect to gain, Doyle said the developer has already deposited \$10,000 to cover County expenses and will continue cover all such expenses, so there will be no cost to the County.

On the other hand, he said the resort will establish an \$18,000 tax base and provide a unique opportunity for youth. Because skiing is a lifelong, family sport, he said he hoped local residents will take advantage of the facility. He also said Brighton hires employees as young as 14 years old, who can earn spending money and ski passes and there will be other job opportunities during the winter that can supplement summer agricultural employment.

He assured that Brighton does not restrict multiple uses but that hunting on the Salt Lake County side is prohibited by the County in response to demands by nearby residents. He said four-wheel and all-terrain vehicles must be regulated, in order to protect the terrain. He pointed out that the area used by snowmobilers is not near the ski slopes and that the skiing terrain would not be suitable for snowmobiling. He promised there would be no conflict.

One snowmobile enthusiast doubted that there would be room for both snowmobilers and skiers to park on Snake Creek Road, especially if it is also used by shuttle buses. Von Allman said the snowmobilers' needs would be incorporated into the facility's plans. He said one possibility would be to shuttle skiers from The Homestead and that it would, then, be a natural base for parking. The plan is to disperse parking areas, if possible, rather than building one large parking lot. He added that the site used for parking by most snowmobilers is on private land.

Questions were raised about additional traffic to the resort from Utah County, because it would be a shorter drive to Brighton slopes than driving to the Salt Lake side. Von Allman responded that even

during peak hours, the maximum number of cars on the road to Brighton is 63 per hour. Since there can be more than 3,000 skiers on Brighton slopes at one time, and 600 is the limit that can be accommodated by the lifts on the Wasatch side, he didn't think traffic through the Heber Valley would pose a significant problem.

Continuing to answer questions about crowding, Doyle said the resort can only succeed as long as it provides a "pleasant experience", and that long lift lines discourages skiers.

"Skiing is a very competitive business. When somebody can have a better time skiing at Park City or Deer Valley, or somewhere else,

they'll go there, if it's less crowded, and enjoy it more," he said.

In addition, he said setting a limit on the number of skiers that would be allowed would be part of Brighton's maintenance agreement with the County.

He further tried to alleviate concerns about crowding by

reporting that Wasatch Mountain State Park reports 900,000 visitors per year, concentrated during the summer months. By comparison, he said Brighton only expects to draw a maximum of 30,000 to 40,000, through the winter months, if everything goes very well.

An EMT suggested that because the ski runs will be mainly for experts, there will be a significant demand on County emergency personal and equipment, with ambulances frequently having to carry injured skiers across the Heber valley to the hospital, or noisy helicopters picking them up from the slopes.